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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/629,087	07/28/2003	Charles E. Holm	HOLM-004	5966
7590	12/19/2003		EXAMINER	
Michael S. Neustel Suite No. 4 2534 South University Drive Fargo, ND 58103			LOBO, IAN J	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3662	

DATE MAILED: 12/19/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/629,087	HOLM, CHARLES E.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ian J. Lobo	3662	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 7312003.
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

2. Claims 1-8 and 11-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mechling, IV ('852) when taken in view of Lowden ('336) or Combs, III ('095).

The patent to Mechling, IV (hereinafter Mechling) discloses a submersible ice fishing system. The system includes a submersible unit (10) in communication with a control unit (16) and a line release (14) attached to the submersible unit (10).

The difference between Mechling and claim 11 is in the claimed line release. In the claim the line release "has a first jaw and a second jaw". Mechling discloses (col. 3, lines 39-43) that the line release is commonly known and may typically be used with down riggers and the like.

The patents to Lowden (see figures 3 and 4) and Combs, III (see figure1) each teach jaw type line release mechanisms (including a first and second jaw) typically used with down riggers. In view of Mechling's statement that the line release is commonly known and typically used with down riggers, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to utilize the jaw type line release mechanism commonly used in down riggers as the release means of Mechling. Independent claim 11 is so rejected.

Independent claim 1 is similarly rejected as claim 11 in as much as the "swivel connector (46)" reads upon the claimed "downrigger clip".

Dependent claims 2-8 and 12-18 are further provided by the combination of Mechling and Combs, III or Lowden. For example, with respect to claims 3, 4, 13 and 14, see the jaw shapes of Lowden and Coombs, III. With respect to claims 7 and 17, skis 36 read upon the fins claimed. With respect to claims 6 and 16, see Fig. 1. With respect to claims 8 and 18, see Mechling, col. 4, lines 21- 28.

3. Claims 9, 10, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mechling, IV ('852) when taken in view of Lowden ('336) or Combs, III ('095) as applied to claims 1 and 11 above, and further in view of Fedora et al ('016).

Claims 9 and 19 differ over the Mechling system by claiming a release switch on the control unit. Claims 10 and 20 further differ over the Mechling system by claiming that the control unit includes a joystick. As disclosed on col. 5, lines 12-13, Mechling discloses "user control may be incorporated into control 16" but does not disclose a "joystick".

The patent to Fedora et al discloses a remote control angling device wherein the control unit includes user control through a joystick (3a). Joy sticks are well known for their advantages of designating remote movements in 360 degrees. Thus, to have utilized a joy stick, as taught by Fedora et al, as a user control mechanism in Mechling would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the ability to control movement in 360 degrees. Claims 10 and 20 are so rejected.

Further, Fedora, on col. 5, lines 9-54, suggest the use of a release switch to better control the release of the fishing line. To have modified Mechling to include a release switch in the control unit would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art in view of the advantageous controllability afforded. Claims 9 and 19 are so rejected.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ian J. Lobo whose telephone number is (703) 306-4161. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 6:30 - 3:00.
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas H. Tarca can be reached on (703) 306-4171. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

- Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 306-4180.



Ian J. Lobo
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3662